



Working to Improve Safety and Self Esteem since 1994

Women's Safety Advocates

Beyond Volunteering

**A pathway to
trauma-informed
learning
opportunities**



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1. Background

Wise Women is committed to providing trauma informed services to women who have experienced male violence and abuse. We provide a variety of services, including;

- Courses; to increase women's sense of safety and confidence.
- Events; to encourage critical thinking and connections between women.
- Consultation; providing women with opportunities to influence policy and strategy. These consultation groups include;

Consultation projects, where women contribute their life experience and opinions, including;

- **Glasgow Women's Voluntary Sector Network**

A forum to share information and mutual support. Raise awareness of and advocate for alleviation of social exclusion & discrimination faced by Women in Glasgow. The Network oversees 2 events per annum for women to discuss issues that affect their lives.



- **Survivors United**

A woman only space to discuss issues relevant specifically to survivors of male violence and abuse and information collated with be shared with those charged with designing and providing services.

- **Safer Steps**

The aim of Safer Steps tours is to collate information on women's experiences of safety in public spaces in Glasgow, influencing decision making on structural changes and service provision in the city. The Safer Steps Project is a programme of 3 sessions culminating in a safety tour of an identified area of concern.

2. Who can volunteer at Wise Women?

Although Wise Women's services are open to all women in Glasgow, we are committed to providing learning and development opportunities to women who have experienced male violence and abuse.

To ensure we are accessible as possible to women who have experienced male violence and abuse we have developed a pathway for women exiting the violence against women sector in Glasgow, (appendix 1).

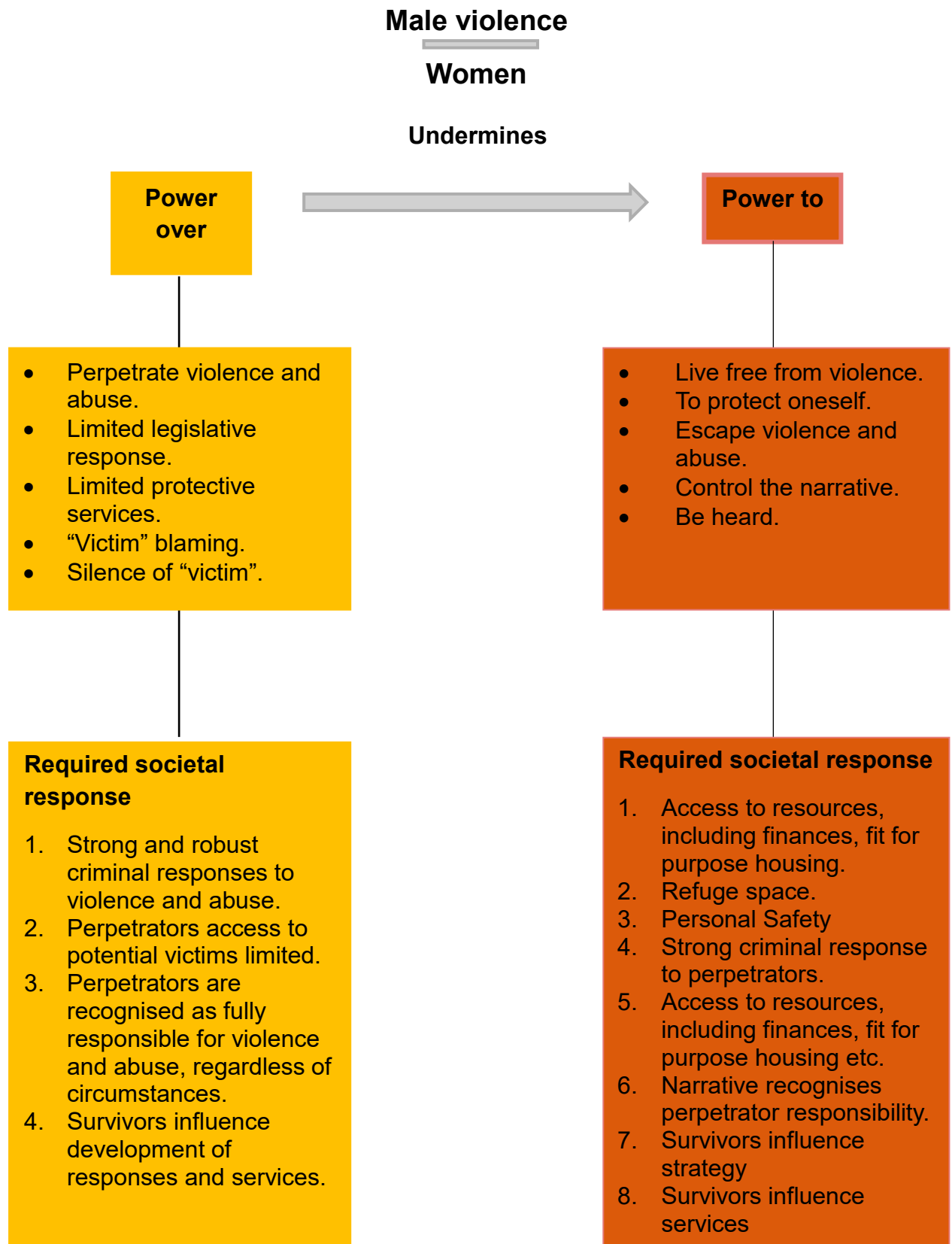
3. Feminist model of power

Yoder and Khan (2016) recognised that power comes in two forms;

Power to: personal empowerment

Power over: the domination or control of one person or group over another.

Within the context of male violence against women, this model can help us to name not only the perpetrators of violence, but also the impact of power imbalances and the form that interventions should take.



(Yoder and Khan (2016). “*Toward a feminist understanding of women and power.*”)

Wise Women's Volunteer Project aims to increase women's "power to", by providing Trauma-informed support for volunteers, this will include;

- An understanding that women have common experience of violence and abuse ranging from grooming to rape and sexual assault, (Kelly, L. (1998) *Surviving Sexual Violence*).
- An approach that recognises that women who have experienced violence and abuse can sometimes experience crisis periods. If this occurs women will have as much control as possible over decisions about their wellbeing and should be signposted to appropriate services, where required. This connection to support services will be identified during the initial information gathering stage.
- Ensuring workloads are appropriate and that support and supervision is provided. At all times women should feel safe during their volunteering activities, (Herman, J. *Trauma and Recovery; from domestic abuse to political terror.*) Care should be taken to ensure women leave activities feeling safe and are satisfied with their work at the end of the session.
- Activities that not only provide opportunities for learning, but support women to regain a sense of self separate from their experience of abuse. Nugent highlighted "that recovery [from addiction] involved regaining control, agency and empowerment and a revision of 'the self' within the wider social structure" (Nugent, B. (2025) *"Women in Recovery; Rapid Review of Evidence"*, Social Recovery Consortium). We believe this approach is also relevant for survivors recovering from violence and abuse.
- Wise Women recognises that women do not volunteer in isolation. At the information gathering stage women will, where required, receive support to;
 - Ensure their income is maximised. Wise Women will work in partnership with Financially Included to achieve this.
 - Link women into confidence building and personal safety services where required, when identified during the information gathering period.
 - Digital safety support.
 - Volunteers will receive regular group support and supervision. Further more staff will be available to answer volunteers' questions as and when required.

All of these activities will be included in the volunteer's activity hours.



4. Volunteering at Wise Women

A feminist approach to learning, skill-building, and empowerment

This pathway provides a supportive and flexible structure for volunteers to gain knowledge, practical experience, and confidence in a trauma-informed, feminist environment. Women's Safety Advocates will progress at their own pace, with clear milestones that focus on self-development, autonomy, and meaningful learning.

This framework recognises contribution and engagement of women who have participated in Wise Women workshops, courses, and placements within the organisation once they have commenced their role as Women's Safety Advocates.

The trauma-informed volunteer pathway also includes women that are members of the GWVSN, Survivors United and Safer Steps.

5. What women can expect

Each volunteer will begin by visiting the office for an initial meeting. During this visit, they will discuss their motivations for volunteering, their expectations, and how we can support them in achieving these goals. Once discussed and agreed upon, the woman will sign the summary in our Women's Safety Advocate activity plan to confirm their understanding and commitment.

Women's Safety Advocates will receive a copy of our relevant staff policies and our vision statement for reference.

As part of their introduction, each volunteer will be introduced to all members of staff. They will have the opportunity to speak with each team member to learn about their role within Wise Women. Based on these discussions and the organisation's outcomes, the volunteer may either shadow a staff member or collaborate with them on a specific project. We will continually support the volunteers to ensure that their volunteering goals are being met.

Final Considerations: Trauma-Informed Support

- ✓ Recognising individual needs, ensuring volunteers feel empowered but never pressured.
- ✓ Providing mentorship and ongoing guidance, reinforcing personal confidence and decision-making.
- ✓ Encouraging self-paced development, allowing volunteers to engage at the right level for them.
- ✓ Celebrating contributions, ensuring volunteers feel valued for their learning and impact.

6. Certification structure

Wise Women has developed a certification structure that recognises the various stages of activity Women's Safety Advocates will contribute to.

Volunteer hours will be collated over the year and an annual celebration event will be held to distribute certificates. This will allow Women's Safety Advocates to engage in various activity throughout the year, gathering learning, experiences and hours, with each activity they are involved in.

☐ **Learning & Confidence Building**

 *Settling in and understanding the foundations*

Focus Areas:

- Creating a welcoming and safe space for gradual involvement.
- Introducing feminist principles, digital safety, workplace skills and income maximisation.
- Learning through observation before direct engagement.

Activities & Learning:

- ✓ Introductory training on gender-based violence, trauma-sensitive approaches, and digital safety.
- ✓ Shadowing experienced Women's Safety Advocates, familiarising themselves with organisational processes.
- ✓ Confidence-building sessions, reinforcing self-trust and resilience.
- ✓ Basic administrative tasks, learning professional email etiquette, resource organisation, and workplace communication.

☐ **Practical Application & Skill Development**

☐ *Applying knowledge and gaining hands-on experience*

Focus Areas:

- Strengthening interpersonal skills, reinforcing confidence in professional interactions.
- Developing problem-solving and adaptability, essential for structured roles.
- Supporting workshops and community events in a practical yet trauma-sensitive way.

Activities & Learning:

- ✓ Assisting in workshops, practising facilitation and organisational tasks.
- ✓ Helping with research, learning how policies impact women's rights and feminist advocacy.

✓ Building workplace experience, engaging in structured teamwork and project planning.

✓ Active listening and engagement, ensuring that interactions prioritise respect, autonomy, and emotional safety.

□ Deepening Knowledge & Independent Skill Use

♥ *Gaining autonomy and preparing for future pathways*

Focus Areas:

- Strengthening workplace skills that can be applied in various roles.
- Encouraging self-reflection on strengths and personal development.
- Preparing for long-term engagement or continued volunteering.

Activities & Learning:

✓ Exploring independent projects, allowing volunteers to apply their learning in ways that suit them.

✓ Intersectionality workshops, expanding understanding of how gender-based violence affects different communities.

✓ Mentorship opportunities, supporting new volunteers while reinforcing confidence.

✓ Building personal advocacy, ensuring volunteers feel empowered in their knowledge and engagement.

7. Support after activity plan is completed

Wise Women engages with women as long as they want to attend our services, however we hope that the Women's Safety Advocates will encourage women to engage with learning and activity outside the violence against women sector. We also hope that the experience will prepare women for employment in the violence against women services, and secondary services.



Once women have decided their activity as Women's Safety Advocates is near completion, the Women's Training Worker, or other identified worker, will provide the following;

- A preparation for exit meeting. This will look at women's hopes for the futures and what further learning, information or activity will support her future.
- A reference, where requested.
- Signposting to relevant opportunities.

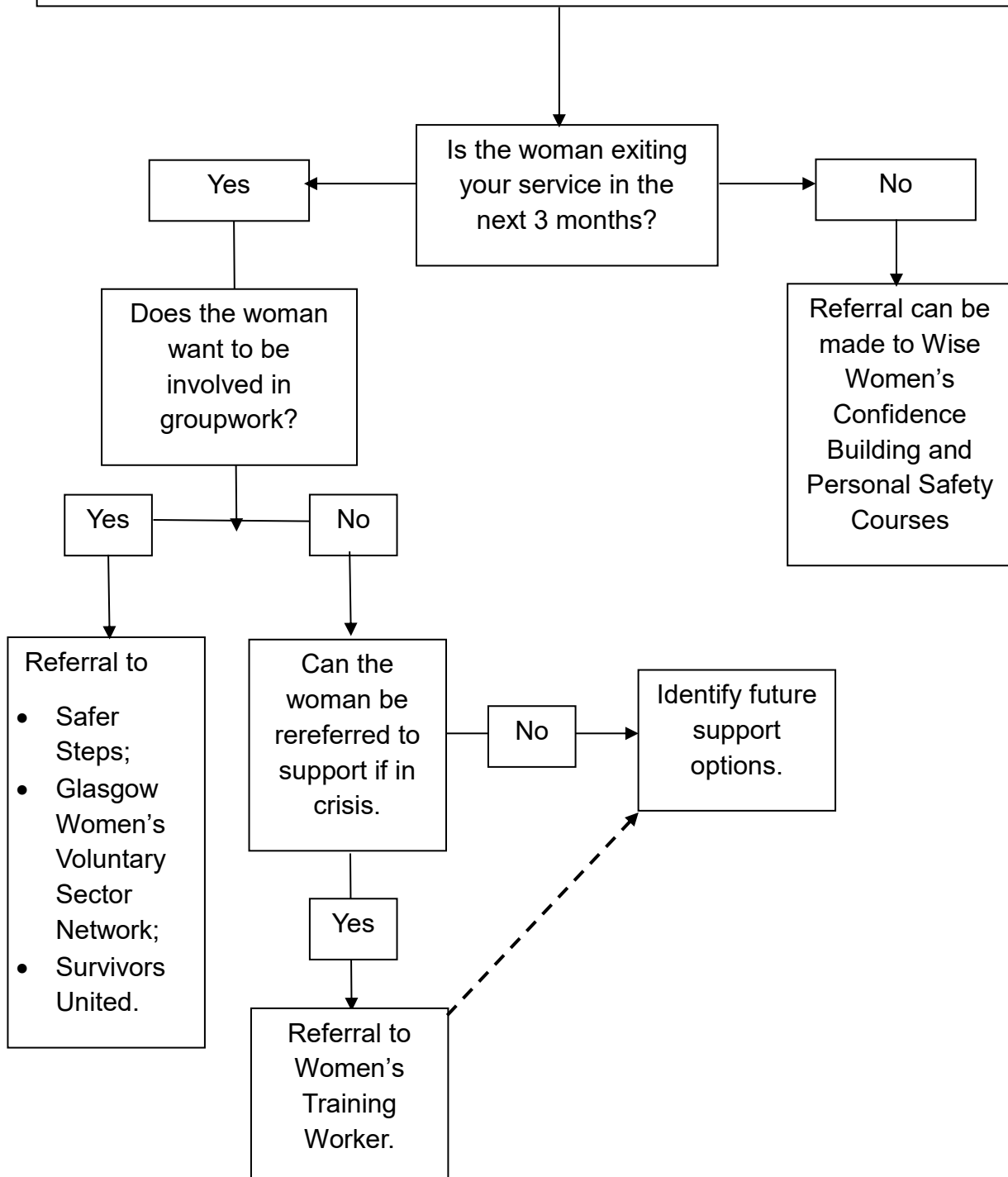
8. Referral process

Wise Women wish to make volunteering as accessible as possible. In order to refer women can;

- **Self-refer.** This can be done via
 - A tutor on a course.
 - By telephone; 0141 370 0739.
 - By email; info@wisewomen.org.uk.
 - Via our website; [www. Wisewomen.org.uk](http://www.Wisewomen.org.uk).
- **Refer via a worker.** Any worker can refer a woman to the volunteer service. All we ask is;
 - The woman is aware of the referral.
 - That the woman is voluntarily participating and that there are no additional pressures to engage, i.e. proof of employability activity, as part of criminal justice license activities.
 - That the woman is ready for volunteer activity, particularly where there are ongoing issues. This would not necessarily exclude women, but would be included in the initial information gathering stage, (see appendix 2).

Referring Agencies

Daisy Project, Glasgow and Clyde Rape Crisis, Glasgow Women's Aid, Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid, SAY Women, Women's Support Project, TARA.





VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY PLAN

This activity plan has been created to support volunteers to identify what outcomes they would like to achieve through their work with Wise Women.
The Workplan should be volunteer led.

Name of Women’s Safety Advocate:
Title of position:

Number of hours available:

Please identify 3 outcomes you would like to achieve for your development through your volunteer work.

Describe the work the Women’s Safety Advocate will be undertaking.

What outcomes will be achieved with this work?

What support does the Women's Safety Advocate require to complete this activity plan? (Please include the involvement of secondary services, such as Women's Aid)

Who will be the Woman's Safety Advocate's named support worker?

Name:	Contact No:
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Has the volunteer been provided with the following:

Document	Required	Provided
Wise Women's Beliefs and Values		
Health and Safety Policy		
Equal Opportunities Policy		
Adult Safeguarding Policy		
Child Protection Policy		
Expenses Guide		

We agree to the above workplan. This can be reviewed at any time.

I agree to adhere to Wise Women's beliefs and values and not to bring the organisation into disrepute during my volunteering. I will inform Wise Women of any concerns regarding Adults Support and Project or Child Protection immediately. I will inform my named worker if I cannot attend a pre-arranged meeting or achieve an identified timescale. I will always prioritise women's needs when volunteering with Wise Women.

Women's Safety Advocate name:	
Signature:	
Date:	

Office use only

Is a PVG required to achieve this Activity Plan Yes ☐ No ☐



For more information:

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G31 1JF

Contact Us

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